

Reach out and thank someone!



Do you ever shy away from expressing your thanks for something you appreciated?

It's time to break that habit. Not only does it feel fantastic to the person on the receiving end, it feels good to focus on what you're grateful for. There's loads of research on the health benefits of gratitude (greater life satisfaction, better sleep, even improved physical health) and researchers recently set out to determine why people are sometimes reluctant to express their appreciation directly to another person. Participants were asked to send someone in their life a letter of gratitude and to predict how the recipient would react. After the letter was sent, the researchers compared these predictions to the recipients' actual reactions.

Researchers found that the senders overestimated how awkward the recipient would feel and underestimated how happy they'd be to get the letter. The senders also worried needlessly that the recipients would judge their writing harshly; in fact, what mattered to the recipients was the warmth of the note.

Clearly, when you express thanks, whether in a letter, by phone, or in person, everyone wins.